

network

HUMANITIES

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CCH LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO HEAR DIRECTLY FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

CALIFORNIA STORIES: HOW I SEE IT TO INVOLVE YOUTH IN CREATING VIDEOS AND MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATIONS AND EXPLORING CALIFORNIA'S IMMIGRATION HISTORY

LISTEN UP, CALIFORNIA. CCH has launched a new story-based campaign that will enable Californians to learn firsthand about the experiences and lives of the state's young people.

The new campaign, called California Stories: How I See It, is the third major program of the Council's ongoing California Stories initiative, designed to strengthen communities and connect Californians by uncovering personal and community stories that tell the story of our state today. "California's young people, many of whom are immigrants or come from immigrant families, represent

our future, yet typically they aren't heard, and their stories remain largely hidden," said Jim Quay, executive director of the Council. "Indeed, many adults, including important decision-makers, know little about the special challenges young people face despite the fact that this next generation will influence the state's future. How I See It is an invitation and an opportunity for young people to tell us their stories — and for the rest of us to gain insight into what's going on in young people's lives.

"The campaign will also give youth an opportunity to connect to their communities, develop a range of skills that will serve them well in

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Mariano Aguilar, of Mexican descent, documented his family's P'urepecha community in Pánuco, Robles as a participant in a Council-supported photography project during the California Stories Uncovered campaign. Photo/Steve Miller

CCH awards \$238,000 to four film projects that reveal little-known aspects of California life

Mental illness, independent bookstores, a racetrack and gay adoption are the topics of films selected by the Council in its latest round of California Documentary Project funding. A total of \$238,000 was awarded to four film projects, all of which are currently in production.

In "When Medicine Got It Wrong," Producer and Director Katie Cadigan and Director and Editor Laura Murray tell the story of San Mateo County parents who rebelled against being blamed for their

children's schizophrenia, prompting changes in psychiatry's understanding of the disease. The film's story begins in 1974 and follows three families whose sons developed schizophrenia in their teens. We learn how the parents founded an organization to fight for better treatment for the children and to change people's perception of the disease. Interviews with mental health experts, politicians and psychiatrists reveal the complex origins of California's current mental healthcare problems. "Ours is a story

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LEARNING FROM THE NEXT GENERATION

By James Quay, Executive Director

This issue of Humanities Network marks the official launch of How I See It, the third phase of the Council's California Stories initiative.

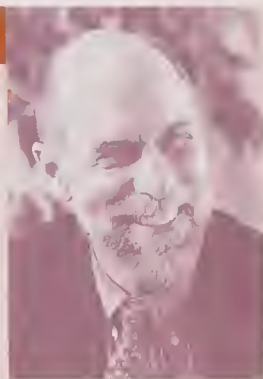
The new campaign, like the two that preceded it, Reading "The Grapes of Wrath" and California Stories Uncovered, is designed to solicit the stories of Californians and to use the collection and presentation of those stories as a means for connecting communities. Unlike our previous efforts, though, How I See It will primarily involve programs designed to attract the participation of young people between the ages of 14 and 22. Separately, the Council will continue to make grants under the California Story Fund and the California Documentary Project.

This is the first time that the Council will focus on a youth audience, although programs for young people have been part of the Council's program mix in the past. In fact, one of the highlights of the 2005 California Stories Uncovered campaign was a photography program that involved immigrant and refugee teens in documenting their experience as newcomers, with help from professional writers and photographers. Russian teens in West Hollywood, P'urepecha kids in Paso Robles, and high school students from diverse cultures in Riverside and San Francisco documented their families and neighborhoods and exhibited their work to the public.

Like many participants who have shared stories through our projects, many of these youths reported not having heard their voices or their stories in the mainstream media previously and assumed that no one cared about them. This appears to be an assumption held by many young people today. Indeed, a survey cited by the Pew Charitable Trusts found that "two-thirds of young Americans believe their generation has an important voice but that no one is listening."

An abiding intention of California Stories has been to provide a forum for stories from groups of those who have been invisible, those whose stories have not been heard. With young people, we appear to have an entire generation that feels unheard. Youths are marketed to and advocated for, but how often do we actually hear young voices or listen to what young people are saying? We decided to make young people our target audience because their stories have much to tell us about present-day California life and will profoundly influence the state's future.

We didn't know much about the attitudes of young people, so this past summer we commissioned a survey of youths to find out what they were thinking. Four of the online survey's many conclusions stood out for me.



First, most young people recognize the importance of community involvement yet acknowledge only slight ties to their communities. Second, young people believe in the importance of the humanities but don't frequent institutions they associate with the humanities. Third, they have grown up with cultural diversity and have an increasing number of friends from different backgrounds and cultures. And, finally, a multicultural California is not a goal for them; it is a reality, one that they embrace. And to add a fifth point, by and large, the survey found that young people are optimistic about their futures.

The programs CCH is launching under the How I See It program are designed to invite young participants to tell their stories and to ask all Californians to witness those stories. The Youth Digital Filmmakers project will invite groups of young people to create short films to be viewed at community screenings and online. In creating these films, the participants will have to consider what story to tell and what audience to reach. None of us can predict what stories they will tell, and that's part of the excitement of this project.

The experience of coming to the state is one that most Californians share. The California immigration website will be designed to reveal the many individual stories of people who have come here, and it will invite young people to place their own stories or those of their parents and grandparents within the broader context of the state's immigration history.

Finally, the youth library program, mostly completed as of this writing, invited young people to choose a meaningful part of popular culture and explain it in a public community presentation. In some early projects, young people gave presentations on MySpace, garage bands and graffiti art.

As How I See It winds down, we plan to invite participants and the public to a conference featuring the programs that we develop and sponsor and some of the young participants. We cannot know now what themes may emerge, but I hope that the conference will provide Californians with an opportunity to witness not only the stories of young Californians, but also their hopes and fears. How we address those fears and nurture those hopes will help determine what kind of state we will all live in. I'm eager to hear what they have to say.

James Quay



Programs Manager Raeshma Razvi

New Programs Manager

Raeshma Razvi joined the Council this past September as programs manager. Razvi is responsible for managing the Council's new grant line for youth digital filmmakers and for overseeing Council programs in the Central Valley.

A filmmaker by training, Razvi has worked with youth for more than six years. Before joining the Council, she was the artistic

director of the Documentary Project for Refugee Youth in New York. In that position she helped refugee youth from West Africa and the Balkans create videos, photographs and writing about their experiences. Before that, she trained New York high school students to produce, shoot and edit their own documentaries.

Razvi's own work includes a 60-minute documentary called "Home," shot in both India and the United States, about the nature and location of home as viewed by two Indian American families.

Razvi holds a B.A. in comparative literature from Northwestern University and an M.F.A. in film and video from Columbia College.

FIVE JOIN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CCH is pleased to welcome the following new board members.

BOB FEYER is a partner in the international law firm Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP. He works in the firm's Public Finance Department, where he represents state and local governments in the issuance of municipal bonds for a wide variety of projects. For more than 20 years, he has been the lead bond attorney for the State of California. Feyer is a graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Law School.

RUTH HOLTON-HODSON is director of public policy at the California Wellness Foundation. Previously she was executive director of California Common Cause. She holds a master's degree in educational administration from the University of Chicago.

BEN JEALOUS is president of the Rosenberg Foundation. He holds a bachelor's degree from Columbia University and a master's from Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar. Jealous was born and raised in Monterey County.

MAX PARRA is associate professor of Latin American literature, regional studies, popular poetics and Mexican literature and culture at UC San Diego. He studied *letras hispánicas* at the University of Mexico and Latin American literature at Hunter College, New York University and Columbia University.

CURT SHEPARD is director of government relations at the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center. A native of Bend, Ore., Shepard holds a bachelor of arts degree in political science and psychology from Linfield College, a master's degree in higher education from Ball State, and a doctorate in education from UCLA.



Doruysh Jananyar learns how to make a kite from his father.
Photo/ Doruysh's friend Islamudin, age 12.

Immigrant kids from Afghanistan, Mexico, Sierra Leone and Iraq turn cameras on their traditions

Thirteen immigrant and refugee kids in San Diego, all ESL students at El Cajon Middle School, developed a brand new appreciation of their heritage this past fall. For 13-year-old Doruysh Jananyar, born in Afghanistan, it was the tradition of flying kites; for 15-year-old Ernesto Aparicio, born in Mexico, it was the custom of making piñatas for celebrations; for 15-year-old Reta al-Khoury, born in Iraq, it was an ancient board game called tali; and for teen Marianna Sheriff, born in Sierra Leone, it was African dancing.

These young people were part of an after-school program sponsored by the AjA Project, a San Diego-based nonprofit organization that provides young immigrants and refugees with innovative educational programs in media arts and photography. The project was funded by the Council under the California Story Fund.

Heading the project was Bernadette Johnston, an AjA program manager and professional photographer. Johnston met with the kids twice a week and taught them how to use the camera as a tool for self-expression. "The focus was on how to use photography to capture emotions and tell

a story rather than on f-stops and shutter speeds," Johnston said. All the young people had access to digital cameras.

Teaching the kids about picture-taking was just part of Johnston's approach. She and her team of instructors also talked to the young people about the role of traditions in their lives and how those customs connected them to parents and grandparents. She then asked each of them to choose a tradition from their own culture and go home and document it through interviews and photographs.

"The traditions they picked weren't new to them," she said, "but they had never before sat down and learned from their parents how to do them."

"Doruysh, for example, knew that his father made and sold kites as a youth back in Afghanistan, but it was the first time he asked his father to show him how to do it," Johnston said. "Doruysh went home and photographed his father making a kite. And then his father taught him how to make his own kite.

"It was also the first time Ernesto sat down with his father and learned how to make a piñata," Johnston said. "Reta had already learned the board game *tali* when she set out to document it, but now she wants her whole family to learn it.

"And Marianna had learned the dance she chose for the project from an aunt in Liberia, where she had lived for a short time after fleeing from war-torn Sierra Leone."

As part of the project, local documentary filmmaker Amanda Law created a 15-minute video featuring the kids' work, narrated by the kids themselves.

In the video, we see Doruysh on the beach in San Diego, flying a kite decorated with the red, green and black colors of the Afghan flag and talking about kite fighting, a popular Afghan sport outlawed during the reign of the Taliban. We learn how piñatas are used in Mexican culture and hear Ernesto saying how happy he feels because he will now be able to pass on an important tradition to his kids. We see Reta playing Tali with her sister, and Marianna demonstrating the dance that means so much to her.

Helping out in the classroom were five students from an ethnic studies class at UC San Diego taught by Professor Yen Le Espiritu, an advisor to the program. "The UCSD students worked with the kids individually and were particularly helpful in guiding the kids in evaluating their photographs," Johnston said.

In addition to their photo documentary work, the young participants developed their writing skills, trying to come up with the right words to explain the images they had captured.

This past December, the video the kids help make was presented to the public at the El Cajon Public Library, and the kids talked about the experience of being in the project. Seeing the video was a powerful experience for the kids," Johnston said. "I think they realized that they really do have something to share with everyone."



Eleven-year old Zach Bishop reads a story he wrote during one of Irene Márquez's writing workshops for Latino kids. Photo courtesy of Irene Márquez

"There's very little encouragement of writing, particularly in underserved Latino communities," Márquez said recently. "Many people are in survival mode and to them art is a luxury. What they might not know is that art can feed the soul and make other things bearable."

Márquez meets once a week with two groups of young writers—elementary and middle school

students from the Sherman- and Logan Heights communities in San Diego. The approach she follows is based on a writing workshop model developed by Amherst Writers and Artists that emphasizes providing positive feedback and a safe, supportive environment in which to experiment and learn. Giving the kids permission to write in either Spanish or English, or even a mix of the two languages, is also part of her approach. "There's not enough

From the time she began writing on Big Chief tablets from Woolworth's in the 1950s, Irene Márquez was hooked on writing. It's what motivated her to found Los Bilingual Writers, a writing workshop aimed at promoting writing in Latino communities in San Diego — and validating bilingual writing. And it's why she turned her efforts several years ago to helping Latino kids learn to write. Her latest project, the Bilingual Literacy Project, funded by the Council under the California Story Fund, involves both Latino kids and senior citizens in writing and storytelling.

representation of bilingual writers in the literary community, so it's something I want to promote. This way these kids can be the Latino writers of the future."

The kids write for 10 to 15 minutes at each session and read their work aloud. "After each reading, I ask everybody to tell the writer what they liked about the piece and what stood out for them. The idea is to address the story, not the writer,

and not to worry about misspellings or grammar."

To prompt the kids' writing, Márquez brings in Mexican bingo cards or other things the kids can relate to. She also brings in the stories she's been gathering from Latino elders as part of the project.

To find the elders' stories, Márquez visits local senior centers. "I introduce myself and let them know

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the future, and, most important, help build confidence in their voice and abilities,” Quay said.

The new campaign, which will take place over the next several years, features three key programs: a digital filmmaking program, an immigration website and a pilot library-based documentary program.

YOUTH TO CREATE VIDEOS ABOUT THEIR LIVES, COMMUNITIES

The digital filmmaking program will involve teens from a variety of communities in making short films about what they see and experience. Award-winning filmmakers and humanities scholars will guide the teens’ efforts.

To carry out the program, the Council will award grants of up to \$30,000 to youth-based organizations and young filmmakers. Programs Manager Raeshma Razvi, an experienced filmmaker who is managing the project for the Council, said that all the films would focus on the broad theme of “connections” or “disconnections.” “This could mean that young people will examine how they connect to the land, the environment or the idea of home — or they may want to

look at how different cultures connect to each other,” Razvi said. “The theme gives people a lot of leeway, but it provides a common denominator among all the projects.”

Once grants are awarded, CCH will bring everyone together for a kickoff meeting. “It will be an opportunity for young people all over the state to meet each other, get inspired and feel part of a statewide effort,” Razvi said.

The guidelines for the grant program are now available on the Council’s website, and an online application will be posted on March 1, 2007. The grant dead-line is April 2, 2007. The projects will begin in June 2007 and continue for a year.

WEBSITE TO PROVIDE FORUM FOR SHARING STORIES, DISCUSSING IMMIGRATION ISSUES

An interactive immigration website will provide an unprecedented look at immigration to California. At the heart of the site will be the personal stories of present-day immigrant and refugee teens and their families as well as the personal narratives of earlier immigrants to California. Many of the stories will be drawn

from projects the Council has supported over the past five years under its California Stories initiative.

The site will contain a wealth of historical information about California immigration, much of it drawn from primary sources such as letters, photographs and newspaper articles. Forums will allow visitors to discuss immigration issues, and an 11th-grade curriculum will be available for teachers to download and use in their classrooms. Users will also be able to contribute their own immigration stories to the site, adding to the breadth of content.

“This will be first site to examine the history of immigration to California using personal narrative and to focus on the stories of immigrant youth,” Quay said.

The Council has convened an advisory group to guide the development of the site. Included are experts in archival photography, immigration history, curriculum development and communication. Senior Programs Manager Amy Rouillard, who oversees Council projects in San Diego, Orange County and the Inland Empire, is managing the effort for the Council.

The new website will go live in September 2007.

TEENS IN LIBRARIES DOCUMENT ELEMENTS OF YOUTH CULTURE, FROM MYSPACE TO HIP-HOP

As part of How I See It, this past fall the Council launched a pilot program in five libraries to engage young people in researching, documenting and reporting on various aspects of teen life. Programs took place in San Diego, Yuba City, Riverside, Fresno and Santa Monica, and teens selected a range of topics to explore, from hip-hop to MySpace. The Council hopes to expand the program to other libraries in 2007.

In Santa Monica teens gave a multimedia presentation on the importance of self-expression in their lives, based on interviews with teen graffiti artists and regulars at a popular open-mike program. “We wanted people in Santa Monica to better understand why youth are involved in activities like spoken work and urban art and what it means to us,” said teen participant Desire Johnson. “One of the great outcomes of the project was that teens now know about organizations in Santa Monica where they can go to express themselves,” said Santa Monica Young Adult

Elders’ Stories Inspire Latino Kids (continued from page 3)

what I’m doing. Some think it’s great and say, ‘yes.’ Others tell me that their story isn’t worth telling, that they don’t have anything to say or that they don’t want to remember the past. I encourage people, and some of them gradually begin to tell me about their lives when they see my interest.”

Márquez takes the elders’ stories back to the kids as prompts for writing. “One woman in her 80s told me about an experience she had at 6 when a teacher made her dress like a boy to recite a poem. It was a traumatic event that she remembers to this day. I went to the young writers with that story and they took it and transformed it into a work of their own.”

Márquez thinks the program benefits both generations. “Seniors have rich stories to share with youth, and the kids can give a new perspective to elders. They are learning from each other instead of feeling separated.”

Márquez plans to publish a 100-page book of the kids’ writing at the end of the project. “Every time a child writes a story I make a copy and give them back the original. Eventually I will turn the stories over to a committee of people from

the community, who will select the best ones for the book.” The book will also include photographs of the kids and the seniors. In June Márquez will organize an event for the general public showcasing the stories and photographs.

“When I started Los Bilingual Writers, I thought I would just have a few workshops for adults,” Marquez said. “My work has grown into something much bigger, but I think there is something of value here, and this is the best way I know to be of service.”



Irene Márquez promotes writing in the Latino community in San Diego through her writing workshops.

CALIFORNIA YOUTH MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR OWN FUTURE THAN THAT OF THEIR COMMUNITIES

A new poll of 600 California young people, commissioned by the Council and conducted this past July, shows that California youths are generally optimistic about their own futures but doubtful about the future of their own communities, the state and the nation.

The poll surveyed Californians between the ages of 14 and 22 about a wide range of issues and attitudes, including how they felt about their neighborhood and community, their interest in learning about other cultures, and the importance they place on the humanities for themselves and for society.

Other findings include the following:

- Young people understand the importance of being involved in their communities but either don’t know how to become involved or are too busy with work and school to be involved.
- They are generally receptive to and respectful of people and traditions of other cultures.
- Most have a diverse set of friends.
- They see the humanities as being important to today’s society and to themselves personally, but tend not to go to traditional venues where humanities programs take place.

“We commissioned the poll in connection with California Stories: How I See It, our new youth-oriented campaign, to give us a better of idea of young people’s opinions and hopes,” said Jim Quay, the Council’s executive director. “We’ve been using the findings to inform the development of programs for How I See It. And we’ll also use them as a benchmark to help us gauge the success of the programs in encouraging and enabling youthful participants to be more engaged in community life.”

The poll was conducted by Teen Research Unlimited.



As part of the *How I See It* pilot program in five libraries, Santa Monica teens gave a presentation to the public on the importance of self-expression in their lives, based on their own research. Seen here, top row, from left to right: Daisy Hernandez, Andrea Razuri, Alyssa Fu, Salonee Bhaman, Yeji Lee; and bottom row, from left to right: Alli Poland, Yodit Yazdinian, Joy Yang, Clare Sim, Desire Johnson, and Young Adult Librarian Erica Tang.

Librarian Erica Tang, who guided the effort.

In Fresno members of the Sunnyside Library's Teen Council created a short film about MySpace, based on interviews with library patrons. "It was a way to explain to adults why MySpace is so popular," said Young Adult Librarian Lisa Lindsay, who worked with the teens over the course of three months to make the documentary. The teens' video made the pages of the Fresno Bee

and was seen by thousands of people on YouTube.

In Riverside teens investigated local garage bands, videotaping interviews with band members, and conducting Internet and library research on a range of musical genres, including heavy metal and reggae. The teens put their findings, including video clips, into PowerPoint, developed publicity, and gave a public presentation of their work in the Riverside Library this past

January. "I know the kids really enjoyed the program," said Senior Librarian Sue Struthers, "because now they want to know when they can do another one."

In Yuba City, teens focused on photographing the good and bad aspects of life in their town, which the Rand McNally's *Places Rated Almanac* consistently ranks as one of the worst places to live in the country. "Most of the kids think it's a great place to live, but it's getting them to realize that even though they live in a small community, they exist in a bigger nation that sees us in a certain way," said Sutter County Librarian Steve Lim. Lim arranged to have a high school photography teacher give a Photo-shop workshop to the kids before sending them out with cameras. The final event took place this past January and featured a PowerPoint presentation, photographs and video clips.

In San Diego, where the program is still in progress, teens from five high schools are creating a video about hip-hop culture based on interviews with local teens and hip-hop artists. The video will be featured at a February event at the main library, which will also showcase a local hip-hop group and various styles of dancing.

"Originally I thought we would do a PowerPoint presentation, but the group said that would be boring, and they're the ones driving this project," said Young Adult Services Coordinator Marina Claudio-Perez. "They're very excited about what they're doing, and I think having a place to present their work means a lot to them."

"The library programs have engaged kids in things they care about, taught them important analytical, research and presentation skills, and connected them to community organizations," Quay said.

How I See It will culminate in early 2009 with a statewide conference for participants and the general public. The conference will feature panel discussions with project directors, humanities experts and youth leaders, and exhibits of the young people's work.

Developing a pilot program for California libraries

Senior Programs Manager Felicia Kelley has managed a number of programs since joining the Council almost 10 years ago, including the Council's work with libraries during its previous California Stories Uncovered campaign. Most recently, she was responsible for overseeing the research and development of the *How I See It* library pilot program, which has given teens a chance to research, interpret and publicly present aspects of their own culture. Here, Kelley, who is based in the Council's Los Angeles office, talks about that experience.

WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THE PROGRAM?

We had started conducting research on youth programs for our new *How I See It* campaign under California Stories, and we were interested in programs that would give kids a chance to articulate their view of the world and then share their perspectives with the public. We also wanted programs that would help kids develop critical thinking skills, build their confidence and give them practice communicating their ideas. For libraries, we knew we wanted something that would be easy to implement, flexible enough to accommodate a variety

of topics, be genuinely youth-centered and youth-driven, and that would use today's technology.

WHAT LED TO THE IDEA OF HAVING KIDS INVESTIGATE SOMETHING ABOUT THEIR OWN CULTURE?

We started by informally interviewing a core group of young adult librarians to find out what would work with teens. We also conducted an Internet survey with additional librarians throughout the state.

The genesis of the idea came from Bridgid Fennell of the Glendale Public Library. She suggested a project exploring the history and evolution of hip-hop, something that had been successful in Glendale. Other librarians also expressed interest in programs focusing on popular youth activities.

For me, a light bulb went on when I heard a presentation by fellow staffer Carlos Torres, the operations coordinator in our San Francisco office. At our last staff retreat, Carlos, a musician immersed in hip-hop culture, gave a talk on the history of hip-hop using video, audio and PowerPoint slides — all based on his own research. The subject meant a lot to him, and afterwards

I thought, Why couldn't we create a project with a similar format that would give young people the tools and resources to become "humanities experts" about some aspect of their own culture and share their knowledge and insights with others in their communities the way Carlos had done?

We took that basic idea, did additional research, made refinements and came up with several possible designs for the project. The one we chose met the criteria we had laid out.

WHAT WERE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES OF THE PROJECT?

There were many challenges, but I think the most difficult was believing that youth themselves could handle a project this ambitious — that they could choose a topic, do the research, develop a public presentation, publicize the program and get an audience.

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS PROJECT IS IMPORTANT?

Young people rarely have an opportunity to tell us how they see things. This project has given kids the support and tools to do just that. They have gained experience thinking critically about a topic,

developing presentations, using technology, doing publicity and speaking seriously in front of an audience about important aspects of their lives. The library project directors have told us that it's been an extremely valuable experience for the kids; it has made them feel respected and valued, and on top of that they have contributed something important to the community. I think the project shows that young people do want to be involved in their communities and do want to help make them better places to live.

WHAT'S THE STATUS OF THE PROGRAM?

Five libraries in different parts of the state began field-testing the program in August. Most of the programs are now over. In the spring, we'll bring together all the librarians who participated and talk about what went well and what the problems were. That information will help us refine the program, which we hope to take to more libraries in the fall.

You can reach Felicia Kelley at fkelly@calhum.org.

Four New Film Projects



A relatively calm moment for the Stewart family, featured in the film project "Preacher's Sons." Photo/Mark Nealey.



Ed Hoffman watches over his parents, Tony and Fran, who refused to be blamed for causing his schizophrenia. Their story is featured in the film project "When Medicine Got It Wrong." Photo courtesy of the Hoffman family archives.



Early morning workout at San Mateo County's Bay Meadows Racecourse, the subject of "Most Are Losers: The Life and Death of a Racetrack." Photo/ Cheri Larsh.



Pat Cody and Andy Ross celebrate 50 years of independent bookselling at Cody's in Berkeley. "Paperback Dreams" focuses on the struggles of Cody's and other independents to stay in business in an era of Internet superstores. Photo/ Katy Raddatz of the San Francisco Chronicle.

that has never been told in any form," said Cadigan. "This feature-length documentary speaks directly to one of the most misunderstood and ignored populations in the state: the one in five Californians living with mental illness."

"**Paperback Dreams**," produced and directed by Alex Beckstead, tells of the rise and fall of independent bookstores through the story of Andy Ross, co-owner and co-founder of the landmark Cody's Books in Berkeley. The film begins with the opening of a new Cody's in downtown San Francisco at a time when scores of independent bookstores are going out of business and follows Ross as he closes the door on his flagship store in Berkeley on the store's 50th anniversary while fighting to keep his new store afloat. "Independent stores function as literary laboratories, and publishers rely on them to champion new and controversial work," said Beckstead. "Internet superstores like Amazon can only sell you what you know

you want. Who will guide readers to their next favorite book? 'Paperback Dreams' will document the struggle of the independents to survive, and demonstrate that their role in bringing new ideas to readers remains as essential as ever."

In "**Most Are Losers: The Life and Death of a Racetrack**," Director-Producer Sara MacPherson and Producer Mark Arellano explore the hardscrabble, insular world of horse racing at Bay Meadows, a 72-year-old racetrack scheduled to be replaced by luxury housing and high-end office and retail space. The 30-minute video documentary follows several racetrack workers as they navigate one of Bay Meadows' last seasons. "Most Are Losers" captures the intersecting aspirations of these "backsiders," many who live and work in the stable area of the racetrack, and their pursuit of the sport of horse racing despite the odds against winning and despite a world increasingly indifferent to them," said MacPherson. "We wanted to

document the world of the racetrack worker before it disappears."

"**Preacher's Sons**," produced and directed by Celia Reed and Mark Nealey, chronicles the family life of Rev. Greg Stewart and his partner Stillman White and their five adopted African American sons. The film, shot over a five-year period, begins in Pasadena, where the Rev. Stewart is a minister, and follows the family to Stewart's posts in Grand Rapids, Mich., Reno, and then to San Francisco, where Stewart is senior minister at the First Unitarian Universalist Society. "The journey of the family is presented within the context of the ongoing national debate about foster care, gay adoption and trans-racial adoption," said Reed. "The feature-length film challenges common preconceptions — on both sides of the cultural divide — about same-sex parents and their adopted children, and it presents a rich body of evidence that will encourage more thoughtful discussion of this emotion-laden topic."

The California Documentary Project is an ongoing grant program designed to encourage documentarians to capture enduring images and sounds of contemporary California life. Recent documentary projects supported by the Council include "Romantico," Mark Becker's award-winning film about Mexican musician Carmelo Muniz Sanchez, which the New York Times calls "a lovely, touching, moving portrait"; "The Tailenders," Adele Horne's compelling look at a missionary organization's use of ultra-low-tech audio devices to evangelize indigenous communities; and the soon-to-be released television special "Chicano Rock" about the contributions of Chicanos to rock music and American culture.

The guidelines for the October 2007 round of funding for the California Documentary Project will be available at www.californiastories.org in May 2007, with applications due October 1. Grant recipients will be announced in early January 2008.



FILMMAKER INTERVIEW

Filmmaker Katie Cadigan was recently awarded a California Documentary Project grant for her film "When Medicine Got It Wrong." Now in production, the film explores the story of San Mateo County parents who in the 1970s became the first in the nation to publicly refuse to accept blame

for their children's schizophrenia. Cadigan recently participated in an e-mail interview with Humanities Network in which she discusses her film, her background and the challenges of being a documentary filmmaker.

Tell me about yourself. Where did you grow up and where do you live?

My father is an Episcopal priest, and my parents were civil rights activists in South Africa when I was in elementary school. Those early years under apartheid impressed on me the importance of living a moral life.

Our family was kicked out of South Africa when I was 10 years old, and we came back to the United States and settled in Connecticut. I received a scholarship to a small Episcopal school structured around the motto, "From each according to their ability. To each according to their need."

I've been in California ever since I finished my undergraduate degree. The diversity, vibrancy and creativity of this coast continue to inspire me.

What were the circumstances that led you to become a filmmaker?

I grew up in a family of natural storytellers and, like them, I love shaping narratives from the events of everyday life. I was raised without much exposure to mass media (television hadn't come to South Africa), so

filmmaking was not initially on my radar. After college I worked for a Silicon Valley public relations firm, where I discovered the power of radio and television and the joy of shaping real-life stories for mass media. The more I developed the practical skill of making complex technologies accessible and interesting to the general public, the more I craved being able to use images and sound to tell much broader reality-based stories about the human condition.

How did you learn how to become a filmmaker? Did you go to film school?

Graduate school was the quickest means I could find to begin establishing myself as a producer and director. I received a master's degree from Stanford University's documentary film program. At the time, Stanford had the only program devoted exclusively to nonfiction filmmaking. One of the best things about graduate school was being in a small community where we were all learning from one another's mistakes. My thesis won the International Documentary Association's Wolper Award for best student film, a terrific boost to my early career.

How did you come up with the idea for "When Medicine Got It Wrong"?

Having lived as a child under a cruel political regime that believed it was "right," I am fascinated by the ways that falsehoods embraced by society are perpetuated and ultimately overthrown.

"When Medicine Got it Wrong" grows out of heartbreaking encounters with elderly parents after screenings of "People Say I'm Crazy," my HBO/Cinemax documentary on my brother's struggles with schizophrenia. When dramatic scientific advances in medicine occur, there is no opportunity for doctors to go back to all the families and patients they'd misinformed and say "Sorry, we were

TRAVELING THROUGH THE INLAND EMPIRE

PROJECT USES STORIES TO LOOK AT TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

How do you get people to talk about transportation issues in a rapidly growing area that desperately needs that conversation?

For urbanist and artist Claude Willey, professor of urban studies and planning at Cal State Northridge, the answer was to hit the streets and experience the problems firsthand rather than talking about them in a typical academic fashion.

For the past two years, Willey and his wife, artist Deena Capparelli, a Rancho Cucamonga native and an art professor at Pasadena City College, have biked, walked and driven through the Inland Empire, the most rapidly growing region in the country, to learn from residents how they move about. This past year, they were able to expand their project, now called “Invisible Trajectories: Passing Through the Inland Empire,” with the help of a California Story Fund grant.

“Throughout its history, the Inland Empire has functioned as a fragmented region, linked first by trails, then by railways and now by a mass of freeways,” Willey said. “People typically crisscross the region to get where they’re going, and many spend a large part of their lives behind the wheel. We wanted to look at the issue of mobility from the perspective of people who travel through the region, and start a discussion about the region’s future.”

Experts like Willey say that the biggest problems facing the two-county area are directly connected

to transportation and energy. “The freeway system is outdated and increasingly difficult to expand and maintain, and there’s mounting concern that a decline in oil production might have a disastrous effect on the region if it continues down the present path,” Willey said.

Willey and Capparelli have been using as the base of their operations a 75-year-old former firehouse in Alta Loma, which they converted into a sculpture studio for Capparelli’s work and a planning and exhibition space for the project. The building is just yards from Pacific Electric/Southern Pacific train tracks, abandoned a decade ago and that today are being transformed into a recreational walking and biking path stretching from Claremont to Rialto.

From Alta Loma, Willey and Capparelli contacted people willing to show them the routes of their daily lives and to tell the couple everything they knew about the areas surrounding those routes.

Dan Torres took them to his old neighborhood on the east side of Riverside and showed them where a string of Victorian houses had burned to the ground and other locations where gang members used to hang out. A former vineyard owner, Muff Accomazzo, led them to an area occupied largely by warehouses where her winery used to be. Marianne Elder led them on the winding country road she uses to get from Claremont, where she works, to her home in Moreno Valley. “It’s traveling on that back road that makes her commute bearable,” Willey said.

The couple also rode buses and talked to passengers. “Some people have to travel by bus from one side of the region to the other just to get to work,” Willey said. “It’s a trip that takes several hours on the bus, as opposed to 30 minutes by car. Contrary to what most people think, a lot of people here can’t afford to own automobiles. And because buses stop running in many places at 8, those people don’t have the freedom of movement that most of us take for granted. It’s something we should be concerned about.”

Willey and Capparelli took photographs of each journey, with occasional help from photographer Mark Tsang. Willey documented the trips in writing and posted his accounts on a blog. Fellow travelers also wrote accounts. Capparelli went home and designed maps based on the excursions.

This past January, the maps, stories, blogs, photos and drawings were mounted at the Wignall Museum at Chaffey College in Rancho Cucamonga.

“We’re hoping that people will come to the exhibit and re-examine how they move around themselves, so they can better understand the place where they live,” Willey said.

“I think it’s also important for people to understand the various layers of history here — to know why the freeway is where it is, about the vineyard that used to occupy the land where the warehouses now sit, and that a train ran on those abandoned Pacific Electric tracks only 10 years ago. I think once people understand the layers, they can begin to realize that people once made decisions about those things and that people can have a role in making decisions about how they want to live now.”



“Invisible Trajectories” will be on exhibit at the Wignall Museum, 5885 Haven Ave., Rancho Cucamonga, through March 3. For information, call 909/941-2702 or visit www.chaffey.edu/wignall/invisibletrajectories.

A smaller exhibit featuring planning documents, photos and rudimentary drawings will be held at Willey and Capparelli’s converted firehouse, 7152 Amethyst Ave., Alta Loma, on Saturdays from Feb. 17 through the end of March. Call 909/989-4263 or e-mail claudewilley@jsbcglobal.net.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wed., Feb. 21, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.: Jon Gillespie, City of Rancho Cucamonga traffic engineer, talks about the closing of Route 30. Screening of Enid Baxter Blader’s “Local 909er,” a California Story Fund film about changes brought about by development in the Inland Empire.

Sat., Feb. 24: “Invisible Trajectories” bicycle ride from Altadena (L.A. County) to the Wignall Museum, with stops in Claremont, Upland and Alta Loma. Call 909/989-4263 for information.

Looking down into Yucaipa. Photo/Claude Willey

100 percent wrong.” With regard to schizophrenia, medicine’s error ripped apart millions of families and condemned them to live in shame and stigma.

The film is also born of family frustration with the steady stream of well-meaning friends, colleagues and even medical professionals who probe for sources of family dysfunction to explain away my brother’s schizophrenia. Why is it that our cultural attitudes about schizophrenia still swirl with misinformation that medicine jettisoned decades ago?

What has to be the biggest challenge in conducting this?

We are up against time in that most of our subjects are over 75 years old, and we need to get all their experiences recorded before they are no longer physically able to tell their stories. To that end, our primary challenge has been securing the funding fast enough to capture this hidden chapter of California history.

How much has funded the film?

This California Documentary Project grant is extremely important. It is our first large influx of funding. The San Mateo affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness provided a start-up grant, and my partner Laura Murray and I personally financed the rest of the project up to this point. We still need completion funds.

Great filmmakers have had the biggest influence on you.

The verité filmmakers Fred Wiseman and the Maysles top my list. I also admire Errol Morris, Michael Apted and Barbara Kopple, who have built careers making compelling films that embody artistic excellence and social relevance.

Visually and ethically I also owe a great debt to Jon Else, who was in residence at Stanford while I studied and then taught documentary filmmaking.

All of these documentarians, and many more, have made it possible for me to walk into chaotic, uncontrollable situations and come out with the essential shots, scenes and stories I need.

What are your goals for the film? What will you want to be remembered for?

I hope “When Medicine Got It Wrong” inspires people to evaluate our collective responsibility toward treating and caring for those among us with severe mental illness. How far has society actually come in understanding that diseases such as schizophrenia are brain disorders with persistent symptoms, not simply behavioral problems that a pill or a few therapy sessions will cure? The film will be a success if it sparks dialogue about the current state of our mental healthcare system.

We just finished shooting our next project, a series that looks at the lives of convicted sex offenders who have completed rehabilitation programs and are released back into neighborhoods after serving their terms. Can they ever truly “recover” and live a “normal” life? Is transformation even possible? I hope to have a long career making films that illuminate dark corners of human existence.

For more information about “When Medicine Got It Wrong,” visit www.whenmedicine.org.

Who We Are

The mission of the California Council for the Humanities is to foster understanding between people and encourage their engagement in community life through the public use of the humanities.

The Council is an independent, not-for-profit state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities supported through a public-private partnership that includes funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities, private foundations and corporations. The Council also receives essential support from individuals.

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